2021 319 Application Form

General Information

Project Name: Big Sky Watershed Corps: Building Capacity to Reduce and Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution

Sponsor Name: Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC)

Registered with the Secretary of State? Y

Registered with SAM? Y

Duns # 078805000

Does your organization have liability insurance? Y

Primary Contact	Terri Nichols
Title	Watershed Programs Coordinator
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State	M
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Signature	Terri Nichols Digitally signed by Terri Nichols Date: 2020.10.29 10:48:12 -06'00'

Signatory	Ethan Kunard
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State	M
Zip Code	59624
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Signature	Ethan Kunard Digitally signed by Ethan Kunard Date: 2020.11.13 09:47:42 -07'00'

Technical and Administrative Qualifications

MWCC understands the challenges our local watershed conservation partners face in implementing WRPs. We work closely with them to increase their capacity to reduce nonpoint source pollution, both in the short and longer terms. MWCC staff have experience managing multiple sub-grant awards to leverage funding resources for watershed health across Montana. In the past two years, MWCC distributed more than $450,000 to 30 separate partners, including funding for partners to host Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) members and for members to carry out small-scale WRP-implementation projects. MWCC is one of three partners who ensure the success of the BSWC Program. The others are the Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM) and the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC). For more about the BSWC program, see Attachment A.

Past Projects

Project Name	Grant or Contract Amount	Funding Entity *(entity name/program, contact person, phone, email)*	Completion Date
Support for conservation projects on private land	$ 48,914.60	Natural Resources Conservation Service Kyle Tackett (406) 683-3812, kyle.tackett@usda.gov	September 2022
Funding for BSWC members and host sites implementing aquatic inv	$ 36,550.00	Montana DNRC Stephanie Criswell (406) 444-6691, scriswell@mt.gov	December 2020
Drought Planning in the Upper Yellowstone	$ 39,000.00	Arthur Blank Foundation Alison Sawyer (470) 341-2063, asawyer@ambfo.com	July 2021

Budget Summary*

		Other Funding	Federal Match	Non-Federal Match	319 Funding Request	Total Cost
	Education and Outreach	$ 0	$ 0	$ 1,000	$ 4,500	$ 5,500
	Project Administration	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 7,600	$ 7,600
	Total	$ 0	$ 0	$ 1,000	$ 12,100	$ 13,100
	Project 1 Name	Big Sky Watershed Corps: Building Capacity				
	Project Planning	$ 10,000	$ 0	$ 36,000	$ 36,000	$ 82,000
	Landowner Agreements, O & M	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
Project 1	Project Implementation	$ 0	$ 0	$ 20,000	$ 30,000	$ 50,000
	Other Activities	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
	Project Effectiveness Monitoring	$ 0	$ 2,000	$ 4,000	$ 6,000	$ 12,000
	Total	$ 10,000	$ 2,000	$ 60,000	$ 72,000	$ 144,000
	Project 2 Name					
	Project Planning					$ 0
	Landowner Agreements, O & M					$ 0
Project 2	Project Implementation					$ 0
	Other Activities					$ 0
	Project Effectiveness Monitoring					$ 0
	Total	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
	Project 3 Name					
	Project Planning					$ 0
	Landowner Agreements, O & M					$ 0
Project 3	Project Implementation					$ 0
	Other Activities					$ 0
	Project Effectiveness Monitoring					$ 0
	Total	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
	Total	$ 10,000	$ 86,100	$ 61,000	$ 84,100	$ 157,100

Fields outlined in black **on this page will auto-populate from other sections of the application form. Fields outlined in red **on this page** will not auto-populate. You must manually transfer the information for fields outlined in red.*

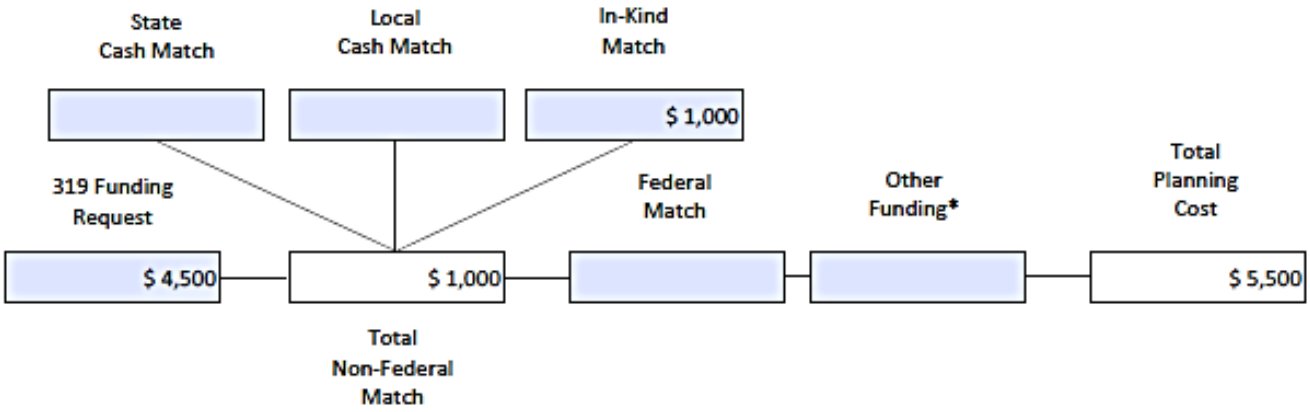
Education and Outreach

DEQ recognizes that developing good projects often requires a considerable amount of time and effort up front to build relationships and trust with individual landowners and stakeholder groups. To promote the development of future projects, DEQ is encouraging project sponsors to use up to $5,000 in 319 funding for education and outreach to develop and capitalize on these critical relationships. DEQ encourages applicants to incorporate on-the-ground projects into education and outreach efforts through on-site demonstrations and project tours. 319 funding may not be used to pay for food and beverages, or for honorariums and gifts. Education and outreach activities funded by 319 or used as match for 319 funding must adhere to all of the eligibility requirements outlined in the annual Call for Applications document.

Education and Outreach Deliverables *(Identify the education and outreach activities you will engage in and methods you will use to document their completion.)*

Local education and outreach are integral to the BSWC program's success and to this project, as described elsewhere in this proposal.
Additionally, MWCC will provide funding for education and professional development (PD) of BSWC members and host site personnel implementing DEQ-accepted WRPs in their watersheds via relevant, in-state trainings and workshops. MWCC will accomplish this by: 1) providing trainings for our network of watershed conservation organizations and BSWC member host sites, and 2) providing funds for registration, travel, and lodging to training events hosted by various organizations. These opportunities will allow watershed conservation organizations and the BSWC members they host to access skills, knowledge, tools, and connections necessary for WRP implementation and nonpoint source pollution reductions.

Deliverables:
1. Specific requests for use of professional development funds prior to the professional development event.
2. Documentation of trainings received, how BSWC members and host site personnel will apply those trainings to support WRP implementation, and costs associated with the event.
3. Documentation of relevant trainings provided by MWCC.



Match Source	MWCC Staff Time planning relevant trainings	Secured	✓
Match Source		Secured	
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**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

Project Administration

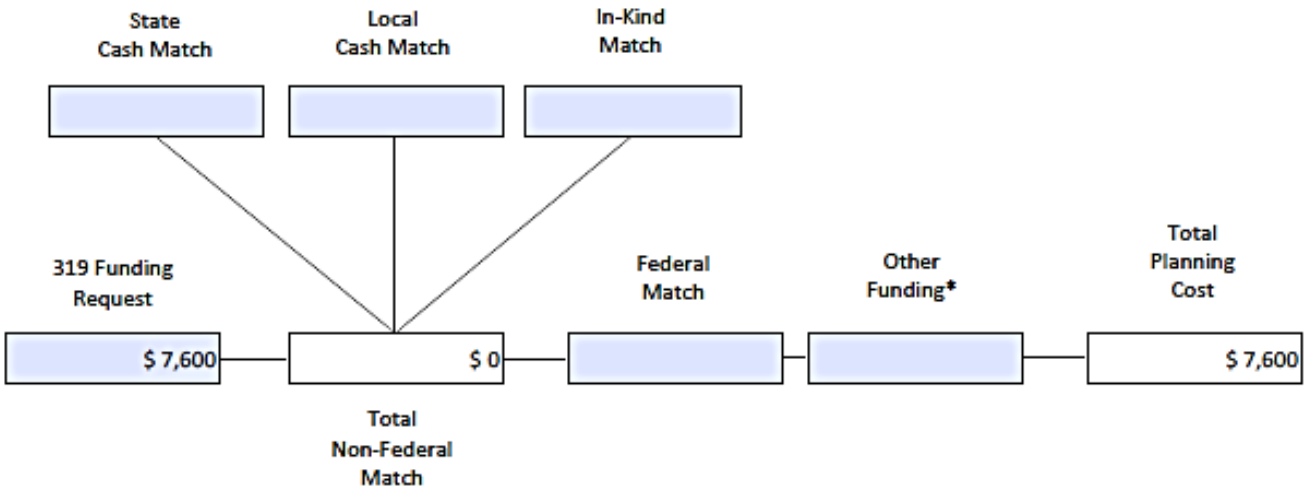
Project administration includes book keeping, invoicing, interim/annual/final report preparation, office supplies, rent, communications, etc. Up to 10% of the total requested 319 funds for your entire application can be used to pay for project administration. However, like all other tasks, payment is by reimbursement for actual expenses incurred.

Project Administration Deliverables *(Include interim/mid-year, annual, and final reports, as well as invoicing and office necessities.)*

MWCC will oversee and be accountable for the completion of all aspects of this project, maintaining regular contact with the DEQ Project Manager, BSWC Program Partners, BSWC members, and host sites. MWCC will also submit all required billing statements, status reports, annual reports, and a final report, adhering to DEQ requirements for all reporting.

Deliverables:

1. Status reports due June 15th of each year.
2. Annual reports due December 15th of each year.
3. Draft final report.
4. Completed final report.
5. Attachment B-Billing Statements.



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Project Form

A separate Project Form ***(including providing separate attachments)*** must be submitted for each project included in your application. Use the following examples to help determine when to lump and when to split projects. For additional assistance, contact Mark Ockey at mockey@mt.gov.

Splitting Examples (fill out multiple Project Forms)

- Stream restoration work occurring on two separate streams, on parcels owned by two separate individuals
- Two projects with significantly different sets of project partners
- Two projects that address substantially different pollution sources (e.g., one project that moves a corral off of a stream, and another to remove mine tailings, with both projects being on the same 800-acre recreational property)

Lumping Examples

- Contiguous stream restoration work spanning multiple land parcels
- 3 projects that address similar sources of pollution on a single land parcel (e.g., moving a corral off a stream, implementing a grazing management plan, and relocating a manure storage facility out of the floodplain, all on the same ranch)
- A mini-grant program designed to address numerous failing septic systems scattered throughout a watershed

Project Name Big Sky Watershed Corps: Building Capacity to Reduce and Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution

Project Location

Latitude | Longitude

Latitude | Longitude

Latitude | Longitude

12-digit HUC(s) # Multiple

☑ **Project site map** attached, showing the location of all proposed on-the-ground restoration

Project Planning and Purpose

Select the Watershed Restoration Plan that your project will help implement.

Lolo Creek - Lolo Watershed Group

Y — Letter of support from author entity attached? *(if no, explain why below.)*

Note: This project proposal would cover any DEQ-accepted WRP where a local watershed organization is hosting a BSWC member for the express purposes of implementing the WRP. The Lolo Creek WRP and the Lolo Watershed Group have benefited from multiple BSWC members, and MWCC/DEQ 319 support for those members, over the years.

Waterbody name from the 2018 List of Impaired Waters: Multiple

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed: Multiple

Waterbody name from the 2018 List of Impaired Waters: Multiple

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed: Multiple

or*

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected: Multiple

Description of identified threat to non-impairment status

Multiple, depending on individual entities and watersheds supported

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected

Description of identified threat to non-impairment status

**While the majority of the available 319 project funding is dedicated to addressing known impairments, EPA is allowing states to use a limited amount of funding to protect non-impaired waters (healthy waters) from becoming impaired.*

Community Participation and Support

Landowner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
N/A	Individual organizations supported by this project will ensure landowner participation and support for their BSWC-led projects and activities.	☐
		☐
		☐
		☐

Partner	Role	Letter of Support Attached?
Montana Conservation Corps	Member of BSWC Steering Committee, which supports the BSWC program and sets program goals and direction. Member recruitment, support, and training. Grant manager for a $482,800 annual federal AmeriCorps grant that supports the bulk of the BSWC program.	☑
Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana	Member of BSWC Steering Committee, which supports the BSWC program and sets program goals and direction. Host organization recruitment and support for conservation district host sites; member training.	☑
Lolo Watershed Group	BSWC host organization since the program's inception; one of 23 past and current recipients of MWCC funding for BSWC WRP-implementation work, including cost share support, professional development funding, and on-the-ground project funding.	☑
		☐

Other Community/Stakeholder Support

There is immense support for the BSWC Program among Montana's watershed conservation organizations. In an anonymous survey conducted by MWCC in the Fall of 2019 and completed by 44 respondents who had hosted BSWC members between 2011 and 2019, 19 ranked their member's work as "highly successful," 19 ranked it as "successful," 5 ranked it "neutral," and just one ranked their member's work as unsuccessful. Additionally, among the biggest factors for member success, 24 listed "Support from BSWC Partner Organizations" (MWCC, SWCDM, and MCC) and 24 cited member trainings. One respondent stated: "Having a BSWC member in our organization allows us to participate in more direct conservation efforts than we usually do. … Without BSWC support, we would likely not be able to do these smaller scale field programs."

Project Description

Describe the nature and extent of the nonpoint source problem you are trying to address, the root causes of the problem, and your proposed solution.

Local watershed conservation organizations are uniquely poised to implement DEQ-accepted WRPs and to reduce nonpoint source pollution in their home watersheds. As grassroots organizations using the collaborative, consensus-based Watershed Approach to conservation, these entities have earned the trust of landowners and community members. These relationships often lead to greater success addressing local water quality issues.

Yet many of these organizations struggle to implement their WRPs due to a lack of resources, including: 1) capacity for effective community education and outreach, 2) time and funding to complete projects with measurable impacts that can lead to more landowner engagement, and 3) access to trainings and other professional development opportunities to provide staff and board members the tools to successfully implement WRPs. At the root of these deficiencies is a lack of dedicated funding to allow Montana's watershed organizations to build long-term capacity and put "boots on the ground" to turn strong relationships into measurable improvements in water quality.

The BSWC program places young professionals – college-educated AmeriCorps members with backgrounds relevant to local watershed health – with watershed conservation organizations for 11-month terms. (See Attachment A.) These members provide a low-cost, high-enthusiasm option for outreach, volunteer recruitment, and other activities that build long-term capacity to address nonpoint source pollution. They also bring new skills and fresh perspectives. Each member contributes more than 1,700 hours of service during their term, and dozens of BSWC host sites have benefited from members who directly implemented aspects of their local WRPs, laying the groundwork for ongoing, sustainable reductions in nonpoint source pollution and leading programs that otherwise would not occur.

Despite the low cost and significant benefits of hosting a BSWC member, many smaller organizations cannot afford the $12,250 price tag, not to mention the costs of funding member-led projects or providing professional development to build organizational capacity long-term. This is where MWCC's 319 proposal for BSWC support comes in.

Since 2015, MWCC, working together with DEQ and with BSWC Partners MCC and SWCDM, has helped 23 watershed organizations to: 1) host and support BSWC members focused on WRP implementation, 2) access and utilize NPS-related professional development training, and 3) implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the form of small-scale NPS pollution-reduction projects. (See Attachment B.) This includes 12 on-the-ground projects since MWCC began offering project funds via 319 funding in 2017. These projects include streambank restoration, riparian revegetation, riparian grazing management plans, and post-fire recovery efforts.

Is this project a continuation of a previous project? If so, please explain the connection.

Yes. The BSWC Program has been operating since 2011 as a partnership among MWCC, MCC, and SWCDM. DEQ 319 funds have supported the costs of hosting BSWC members and of professional development opportunities for host organizations since 2015, through five separate contracts (214011, 216028, 217009, 219011, and 220108). In 2017, MWCC added funding for BSWC-led on-the-ground projects implementing WRP BMPs.

Tasks and Budget

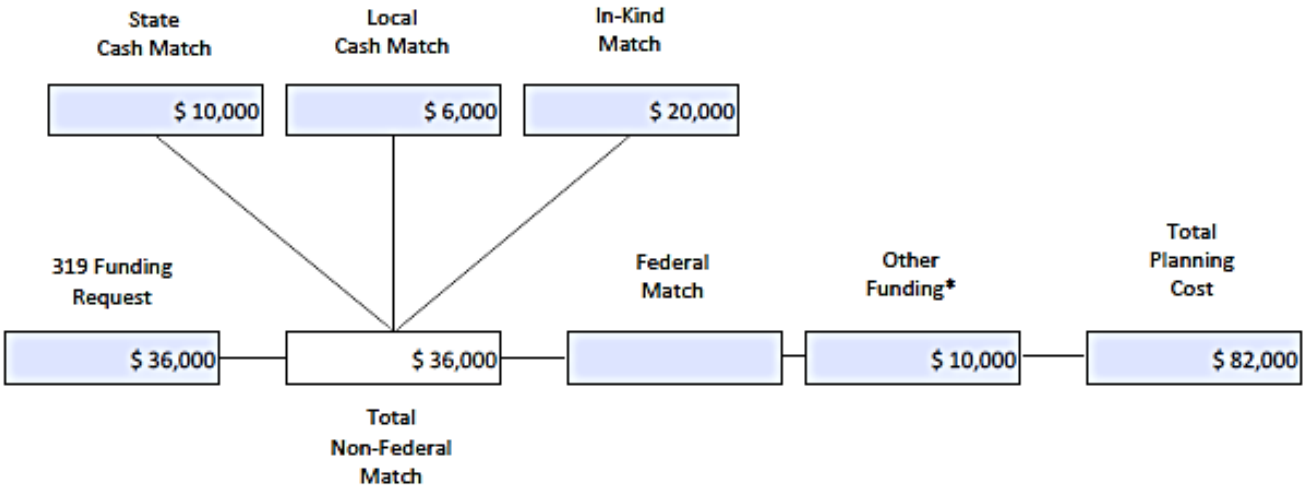
DEQ uses a standard template to develop scopes of work for 319 contracts. The tasks below match up with DEQ standard scope of work template. Some tasks might not be applicable to your project. Please leave the non-applicable tasks blank. If your project doesn't fit the task outline, use the task labeled "Other" to describe your project.

Task 1 - Project Planning Deliverables *(Include such things as completing project designs, conducting site evaluations, obtaining permits, organizing volunteers, conducting scoping meetings, etc. Identify specific deliverables that will be submitted.)*

BSWC Host Site Cost Share Support. MWCC will provide up to $6,000 in 319 funding and at least $6,000 in match for each of 6 or more qualified organizations to support BSWC members. Qualified organizations (host sites) are those implementing DEQ-accepted WRPs and enlisting the skills of their BSWC members to do so. In consultation with DEQ, MWCC will award host site funding on a competitive basis, evaluating host sites based on their proposed work plans for their BSWC members and how well these support WRP implementation. MWCC will also work with qualified host sites to ensure that their members directly implement some aspect(s) of the DEQ-accepted WRP, and that their members adequately report on progress and deliverables.

Deliverables will include:

1. A list of qualified host sites for BSWC member placements and cost share support.
2. A work plan developed by each host site, detailing WRP-related activities that the BSWC member will work on during their term of service.
3. A summary of WRP activities accomplished by each funded BSWC member during their service term, written by the member.



Match Source	Match will come from individual BSWC host sites.	Secured	
Match Source	Match sources listed above are estimates based on past host site cost share	Secured	
Match Source	match. MWCC routinely provides more match than required. "Other" fund-	Secured	
Match Source	ing includes additional costs of hosting a member for each host site.	Secured	

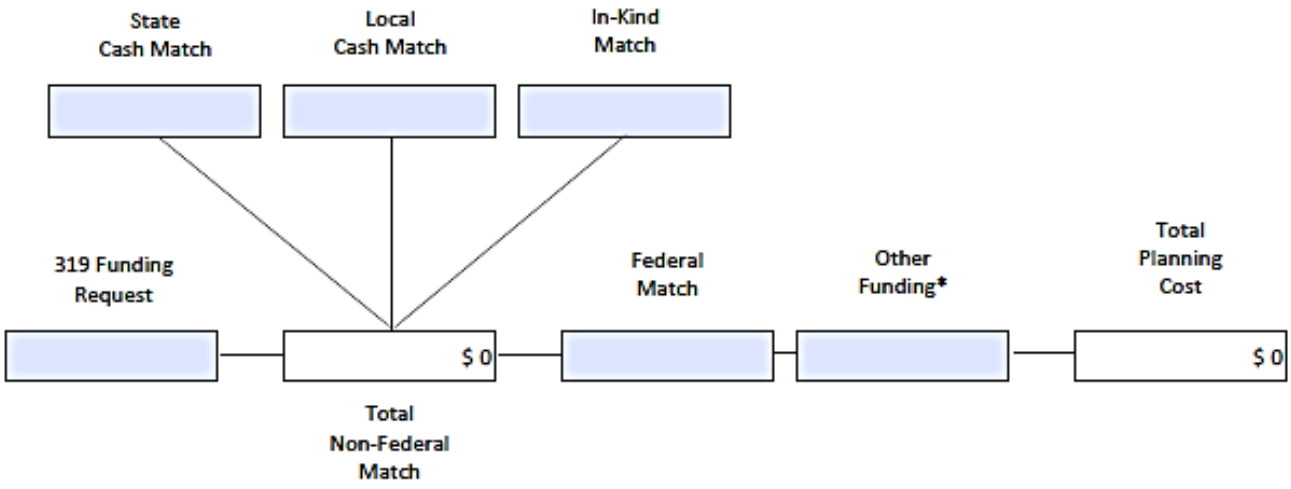
**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

Landowner Agreements, Operation and Maintenance

This task only applies to projects involving on-the-ground activities. DEQ periodically evaluates the effectiveness of each on-the-ground project. To accomplish this, DEQ requires a process be in place to allow periodic access to the project site. The landowner agreement should also specify the roles of each project partner in the design, implementation and continued operation of on-the-ground pollution prevention practices. DEQ does not require the use of a specific landowner agreement template. In some situations, existing agreements between the project sponsor and the landowner may be sufficient.

Task 2 - Landowner Agreements, Operation and Maintenance Deliverables *(Include such things as landowner/sponsor communication, and draft and final agreements.*

MWCC will work with BSWC members and their host site supervisors to secure landowner agreements and establish project deliverables for projects they implement. However for the purposes of this project proposal, we are including these activities along with project effectiveness monitoring and general coordination activities listed under Task 5.



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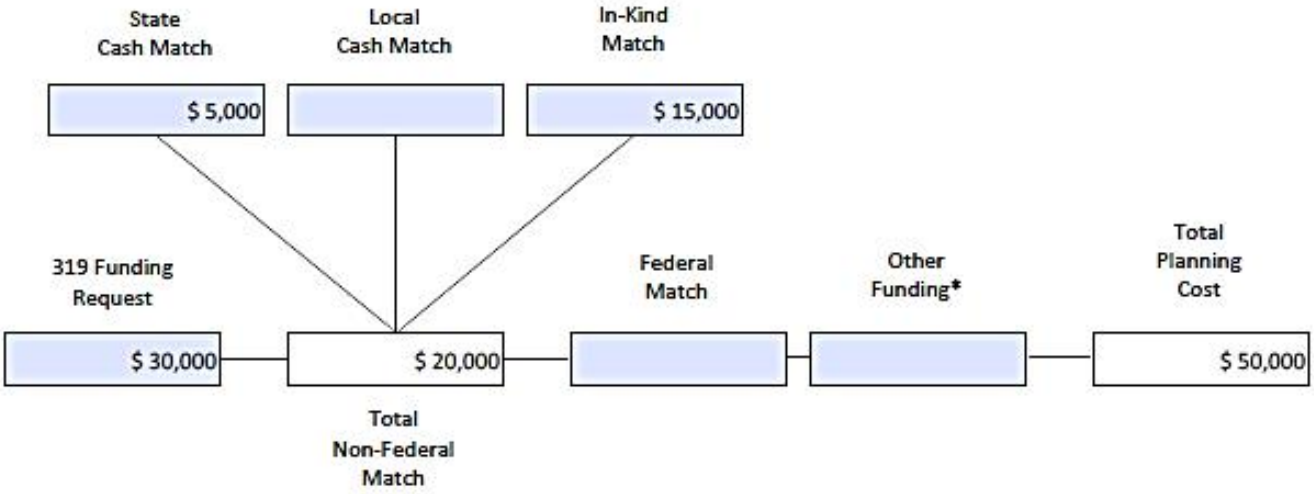
**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

Task 3 - Project Implementation Deliverables *(Include such things as construction oversight, implementation of on-the-ground restoration practices, preparation and submittal of as-built drawings, etc.)*

Project Funding for BSWC implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in host site WRPs. In consultation with DEQ and the MWCC Water Committee, MWCC will select and fund implementation of projects (BMPs) consistent with DEQ-accepted WRPs and carried out primarily by BSWC members, with support from their host sites. MWCC will inform host sites and members of the availability of limited competitive funds and encourage them to develop proposals to request project-implementation funding. Project effectiveness monitoring will be a component of all funded projects, and both interim and final reporting documents will be required. Members' experiences applying for and managing these small grants and implementing these projects are also key to long-term water quality improvements across Montana. Dozens of BSWC members have found employment in the watershed health field upon graduating from the program, sometimes with their host sites.

Deliverables will include:
1. Documentation of a DEQ-acceptable method or process for competitively awarding funding for implementation of BMPs identified in host site WRPs.
2. A minimum of two WRP-identified projects funded under this task.



Match Source	As in Task 1, match will come from individual host sites, and	Secured	
Match Source	match sources shown here are estimates based on typical reporting	Secured	
Match Source	for past BSWC project implementation. MWCC routinely provides more	Secured	
Match Source	match than required.	Secured	

**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

Other Activities

Use this task if the activities you are proposing are outside the scope of the typical design/implement/monitor process. Provide sufficient details to enable application reviewers to successfully compare the nonpoint source pollution reduction benefits of your project to those of other projects in the applicant pool.

Task 4 - Project Deliverables *(Include activities you will complete and the products you will submit to demonstrate completion.)*

State Cash Match	Local Cash Match	In-Kind Match	319 Funding Request	Total Non-Federal Match	Federal Match	Other Funding*	Total Planning Cost
				$ 0			$ 0

Match Source		Secured	
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Match Source		Secured	
Match Source		Secured	

**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

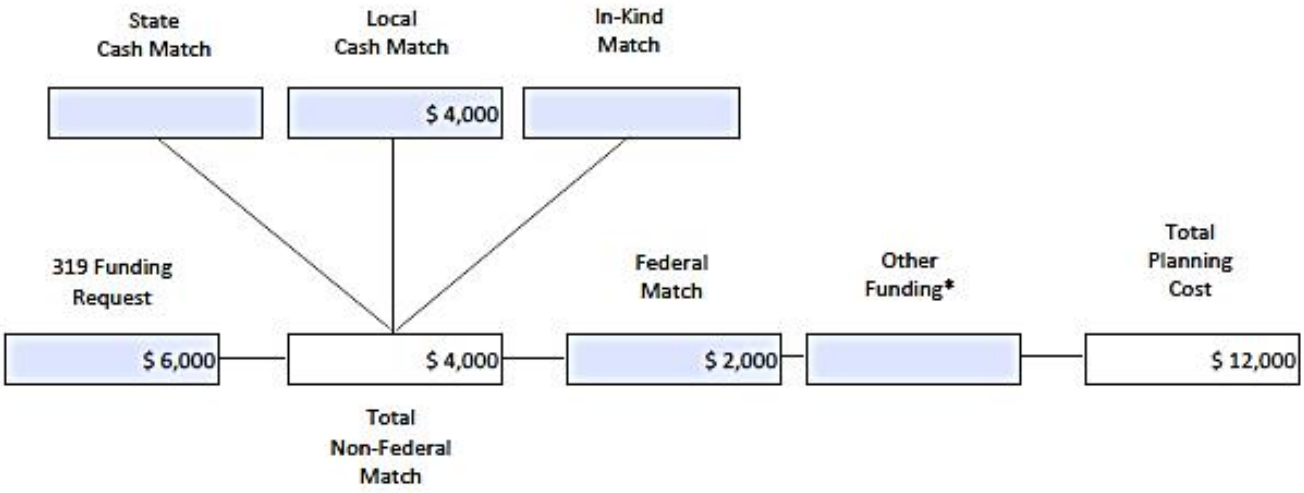
Project Effectiveness Monitoring

The short duration (1-3 years) and limited spatial extent (often just a few hundred yards) of most 319-funded projects frequently precludes the use of traditional water chemistry monitoring as a means of evaluating project effectiveness. Instead, DEQ encourages project sponsors to use simpler, more qualitative tools. Typically, this will include pre- and post-construction photo point monitoring, vegetation mortality measurements, and perhaps modeling to estimate pollution load reductions. Please contact one of the DEQ Nonpoint Source Program staff for guidance relative to your specific project.

Task 5 - Project Effectiveness Monitoring Deliverables *(Identify the specific tools and products you will use to evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of your project in reducing nonpoint source pollution.)*

Project Coordination and Effectiveness Evaluation. MWCC will coordinate BSWC 319 support, in consultation with DEQ, MCC, and SWCDM. This includes announcement of funding opportunities for this project, selection of host sites, funding of professional development for host sites, selection of WRP-implementation projects, and project effectiveness reporting. MWCC will ensure DEQ-approved landowner agreements support maintenance and monitoring of all funded on-the-ground projects. MWCC will work with DEQ to develop reasonable methods of evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of projects funded under this proposal, as well as overall BSWC Program effectiveness in addressing nonpoint source pollution and building local capacity to implement WRPs. Deliverables will include:

1. Documentation of a DEQ-acceptable method or process for competitively awarding funding for implementation of BMPs called for in host site WRPs.
2. Landowner agreements between host sites and landowners allowing project implementation on their property, reviewed and approved by DEQ.
3. Working with BSWC members to ensure quality interim and final funding reports.
3. Site-specific data that will allow DEQ to determine load-reduction estimates.



Match Source	Natural Resources Conservation Service (Federal)	Secured	✓
Match Source	MWCC Partnership Program Revenue (Local)	Secured	
Match Source		Secured	
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**Use this space to record any funding that will be used to support creation of the task deliverables, but will not be reported as match. The purpose of this information is to give application reviewers a clearer understanding of the total amount of funding required to complete a task.*

Water Quality Benefits and Sustainability

Explain why the project is an appropriate next step for making progress towards removing a pollutant/waterbody combination from Montana's 2018 Impaired Waters List or preventing a healthy waterbody from becoming impaired?

The BSWC program provides appropriate next steps suitable to individual watershed conservation organizations working to remove impaired waterbodies from Montana's 2018 Impaired Waters List. The program - and funds provided by this project - may be tailored to each organization's specific needs by providing BSWC members with appropriate skills for WRP implementation and providing funds for community supported BMPs and for professional development and trainings most relevant to individual watershed conservation organizations and their specific, local needs for removing pollutants and preventing healthy waterbodies from becoming impaired.

Will your project address a major local source of nonpoint source pollution? Explain.

Some projects funded under Task 3 may address major local sources of nonpoint source pollution. However it is much more common for BSWC members to implement small-scale projects that lead to additional projects and pollution reductions down the road or free up host site staff time to focus on larger projects that do address major local sources of NPS pollution.

Describe the long-term, sustainable benefits your project will have on water quality.

This project's support for WRP-implementation by BSWC members and their host site organizations has immense and sustainable long-term benefits to water quality in Montana. Watershed conservation organizations who have hosted members report many long-term ripple effects, including:
1. A sustainable, long-term restoration maintenance and monitoring program (Bitter Root Water Forum)
2. Expansion of rain garden workshops and rain garden development (Flathead and Sun River watersheds)
3. Recruitment of long-term volunteers (numerous, including Gallatin River Task Force, Gallatin Watershed Council, and Bitter Root Water Forum)
4. Specific educational programs established by BSWC members that would not exist without them (numerous, including Lolo Watershed Group, Gallatin Watershed Council, and Sun River Watershed Group)
5. Documentation of stormwater infrastructure in communities throughout the Flathead Valley (Flathead Basin Commission and City of Kalispell)

Explain how your project will promote self-maintaining natural, ecological, and social processes that protect water quality.

The promotion of self-maintaining social processes is where the BSWC program thrives. As mentioned above, many watershed conservation organizations have developed long-term educational and volunteer engagement programs that would not exist without BSWC members leading and growing them. BSWC members frequently lead social media campaigns, newsletters, other outreach efforts that keep community members engaged while freeing up host site staff to do more landowner outreach and develop larger WRP-implementation projects. Additionally, more and more local organizations are requesting BSWC members to implement WRPs. One example is the City of Kalispell and Flathead Basin Commission (FBC) hosting a member to address NPS pollution in 2020 based on the BSWC successes of their partners UC3 and Flathead CD, as well as the City of Missoula Stormwater Utility now hosting a member for 2021 based on member successes with FBC and the Missoula Valley Water Quality District in 2020.

Nonpoint Source Goals and Success Metrics

Nonpoint source pollution goal	Action that will be taken to reach the goal	Metric used to measure success
2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, Section 8, Table 8-6: Public has knowledge and resources to address NPS issues, No. 18	Provide support and promote the development and coordination of watershed groups through MWCC activities, training workshops, advertising campaigns, etc.	Trainings developed and hosted by MWCC under the Education and Outreach section of this proposal to support watershed conservation organizations' WRP-implementation effots. Other professional development and training opportunities for watershed conservation organizations, supported under the Education and Outreach section of this proposal.
2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, Section 8, Table 8-6: Public has knowledge and resources to address NPS issues, No. 22	Support NPS Education and Outreach efforts at a local level	Support provided to watershed conservation organizations for hosting a BSWC member (Task 1, host site cost share funding). Additional details under "Project Education and Outreach" on Page 16 of this proposal.
2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, Section 8, Table 8-6: Public has knowledge and resources to address NPS issues, No. 24	Support volunteer monitoring efforts	Funding from Task 1, host site cost share funding, has supported and will continue to support volunteer post-restoration monitoring, as well as monitoring called for in some Sampling and Analysis Plans.

Project Education and Outreach

Describe the educational benefits of your project. Will the project inspire additional nonpoint source pollution prevention work within the watershed?

Many BSWC member-led education and outreach efforts have inspired additional nonpoint source pollution prevention work. These include some of the examples listed above, under "long-term, sustainable benefits," as well as educational aspects of several small WRP-implementation projects funded under this project. Examples include:
1. The Gallatin Watershed Stewards program, which engages community members in reducing NPS pollution in the Lower Gallatin.
2. A pet waste pick-up in the Upper Gallatin that has become an annual volunteer and educational event.
3. An extensive online educational database emphasizing NPS pollution reduction developed by the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program's BSWC member, now available to K-12 educators statewide.

Bigger Picture Benefits

Describe your project's benefits to each of the items below. If there are no associated benefits, type "NA" for "not applicable".

Benefit to additional natural resources (e.g. native fisheries, threatened and endangered species, wetlands, etc).

Benefits to additional natural resources vary, based on the objectives and practices of individual watershed conservation organizations supported by this project. However several supported BMP-implementation projects have benefited native fisheries, improved wildlife habitat, and increased drought resilience. Examples include restoration work that has reduced sedimentation, increased shading and habitat by increasing native riparian vegetation, and developed riparian grazing management plans.

Addressing climate resiliency and hazard mitigation.

Depends on specific projects implemented by individual watershed organizations/BSWC host sites. The Gallatin Watershed Council, Gallatin River Task Force, Sun River Watershed Group, and Broadwater Conservation District all have used their BSWC members' time and skills to implement drought resiliency programs that are directly related to addressing climate resiliency. These include encouraging water conservation, studying the potential sources of increased algae blooms affecting the recreation industry, hosting rain barrel workshops and installations, and working with stakeholders and irrigators to increase stream flows.

Provides direct public recreational access or aesthetic benefit.

Depends on specific projects implemented by individual watershed organizations/BSWC host sites.

Reduces pollutant loading above a permitted point source in a manner that could contribute to future economic benefit for a downstream Montana community.

Depends on specific projects implemented by individual watershed organizations/BSWC host sites.

Directly helps protect a drinking water source.

Depends on specific projects implemented by individual watershed organizations/BSWC host sites.

Benefit to socially disadvantaged populations.

The BSWC Program as a whole supports women entering the traditionally male-dominated conservation field, since a large majority of BSWC members are women. (For example, all eight BSWC members supported by MWCC-DEQ 319 funds in 2020 were women.) These members receive training, grant management experience, professional connections, and many other benefits through the BSWC program. Some of the watershed conservation organizations supported by this funding also work with and support Native American communities and other communities that lack economic resources, including projects that benefit these communities. It has been challenging to directly support Native communities with this funding, since none of Montana's Tribal Governments have DEQ-approved WRPs within their Reservation boundaries.

Additional Attachments

Attach additional items that could help reviewers better understand your project. Items could include site photos, design drawings, site evaluations, permits, etc. Please be conscious of reviewers' time, as they may not have time to read lengthy studies and reports. List all additional attachments below.

- ☐ A_BSWC Program Overview
- ☐ B_319 BSWC Support Map
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Letters of Support

Lolo Watershed Group
PO Box 1354
Lolo, MT 59847

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Watershed Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

November 1, 2020

RE: Letter of support for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Dear Mr. Ockey,

The Lolo Watershed Group (LWG) wishes to convey its utmost support for the 319 grant application submitted by Montana Washed Coordination Council (MWCC). This funding has been instrumental in the work of many small watershed groups, including LWG. Without the technical and financial support of MWCC, our work within the Lolo watershed simply could not get done.

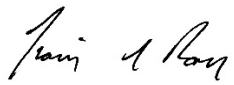
The 319 funding that MWCC has awarded to LWG has been responsible for us being able to secure a Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) member. For most of LWG's history, it has not had a dedicated watershed coordinator. Through non-point source (319) funding administered by MWCC, we are able to have a BSWC member to help with tasks such as education, managing our mailing lists, social media, restoration projects, and just providing a watershed group voice in the community in a consistent way. We depend on this funding to make that work possible. Further, MWCC has been able to help LWG make some tremendous connections made through on-the-ground projects with 319 funding. The ripple-effect between landowners is real! One example is Kim Grennager's property, which experienced significant vegetation loss due to fire. Our BSWC member organized a community planting with the landowner. The landowner brought USDA funding in the form of plant material which paired up with 319 funding awarded through MWCC to make a bigger impact through a larger planting area. Two sets of neighbors showed up to help with the planting. One of these is commencing a major restoration planning project on their own property and the other followed suit with a planting project of their own to restore fire-damaged land. In a rural watershed like this, restoration projects are what piques the interest of other landowners.

Our BSWC member also works on sediment analysis on forest service roads. These metrics are what helps prove the benefit of road closures on Forest Service Lands. For several years, our members have been doing these assessments and have led field trips on these restoration sites to demonstrate to children in the watershed the impacts of sediment and how these impacts can be reduced. Our member has been working with University of Montana Researchers and other non-profits on Forest Service Lands on Tepee Creek (a

tributary of Lolo Creek) to restore connectivity of the stream and the floodplain through beaver mimicry projects. This, as we know, traps sediment and provides cool recharge to low late-season flows.

In summary, the Lolo Watershed Group depends on MWCC funding and 319 support to carry out the work to restore our watershed. We appreciate the resources MWCC makes available and the barriers it breaks down to achieving the common goal of protection and improvement of our watershed. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Travis Ross
Lolo Watershed Group, Board President

MONTANA CONSERVATION CORPS

206 N. Grand Ave, Bozeman, MT 59715 • PH:406.587.4475 • www.mtcorps.org

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Watershed Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

October 27, 2020

Re: Montana Watershed Coordination Council 319 Funding Application

Dear Mark,

I am writing on behalf of the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) to express my full support of the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) and their local 319 funding request. MWCC provides a vital service to Montana's watersheds and local communities and is a key partner in successfully implementing the Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) program. Their community-based initiatives are an incredible asset to the state of Montana and they are always inclusive and thoughtful in their programming, administration, and implementation.

319 funding provided by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and administered by MWCC has played a substantial role in the success of partner organizations and the success of our BSWC AmeriCorps members. In providing this funding MWCC has been able to successfully meet its mission and has also provided invaluable resources to local Montana watersheds and communities resulting in a measurable and lasting on-the-ground impact that will benefit future generations. The projects implemented as a result of this funding have been efficient and effective in mitigating nonpoint source pollution according to local Watershed Restoration Plans, the professional development opportunities have been highly revered and impactful for both BSWC members and host sites, and the cost share support allowed small, yet ever important, watershed organizations to better establish a community presence, build capacity and greatly improve Montana's most precious resource, water.

MWCC provides essential capacity in efforts to improve Montana's watersheds, form sustainable and resilient partnerships, and address critical water quality issues. We are incredibly fortunate to partner with them in implementing the BSWC program.

I strongly urge you to award full funding support to MWCC.

Best Regards,

Bryan N. Wilson
Director-Individual Placement Programs
Montana Conservation Corps
Office- (406).587.4475 x107
Email- bryan@mtcorps.org

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS of MONTANA

1101 11th Ave. Helena, MT 59601
www.swcdmi.org ; 406-443-5711

October 27, 2020

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Watershed Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620
Re: Montana Watershed Coordination Council 319 Funding Application

Dear Mr. Ockey:

On behalf the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM), I am writing to extend our support for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) application for 319 funding to support Big Sky Watershed Corp (BSWC) host sites. MWCC has been a valued partner and an essential resource for the watershed community, as well as conservation districts across the state.

MWCC has been an integral partner in the success of the BSWC program, and that is a direct result of the funding and support that they provide to BSWC host sites through the 319 funding they secure. These funds help build capacity in organizations that desperately need it, allowing them to successfully implement Watershed Restoration Plans for their area and complete projects they would not otherwise be able to accomplish.

The BSWC host site support provided through these funds allows watershed organizations and conservation districts to implement projects that effectively mitigate nonpoint source pollution, increase capacity and training for technical assistance, and expand their reach and opportunity for future project development.

SWCDM supports MWCC's application as it will provide essential funding to organizations that support conservation on the ground and protecting Montana's watersheds.

Thanks you for your consideration of MWCC's application.

Sincerely,

M. Downing

Melissa Downing
SWCDM Operations and Partnerships Manager

Supplemental Attachments

2020 BSWC Host Sites

2020 BSWC Member Impact

- ✔ 35 Members Served 30 Host Sites
- ✔ 58,000+ Total Service Hours
- ✔ 909 Volunteers Engaged
- ✔ 4,500+ Community Members Engaged
- ✔ 160 Miles of Waterways Maintained or Improved

Big Sky Watershed Corps: **Building the Next Generation of Conservation Leaders**

Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) is an AmeriCorps service program that places young professionals with local watershed partners to make a measurable difference in conservation across the state. Now in its 10th year, the BSWC program is jointly administered by MWCC, the Montana Conservation Corps, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana.

Since 2011, BSWC has engaged 222 members who have contributed nearly 380,000 hours of conservation service. Dozens of members have gone on to work for local watershed conservation organizations, as well as state, federal, and tribal agencies working on natural resource issues in Montana, expanding the program's benefits to the next generation of conservation leaders.

BSWC members lead and support a wide array of conservation efforts, including:

- Preventing the spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species.
- School- and community-based conservation education programs.
- Leading and recruiting volunteers.
- Grant writing and management.
- Increasing access to markets for local agricultural producers.
- Riparian and upland restoration projects.
- Monitoring for water quality, water quantity, stormwater runoff, salinity, and other key watershed health factors.
- Maintenance and monitoring of past restoration projects to ensure project success.

MONTANA CONSERVATION CORPS
Tools for Living. Experience for Life.

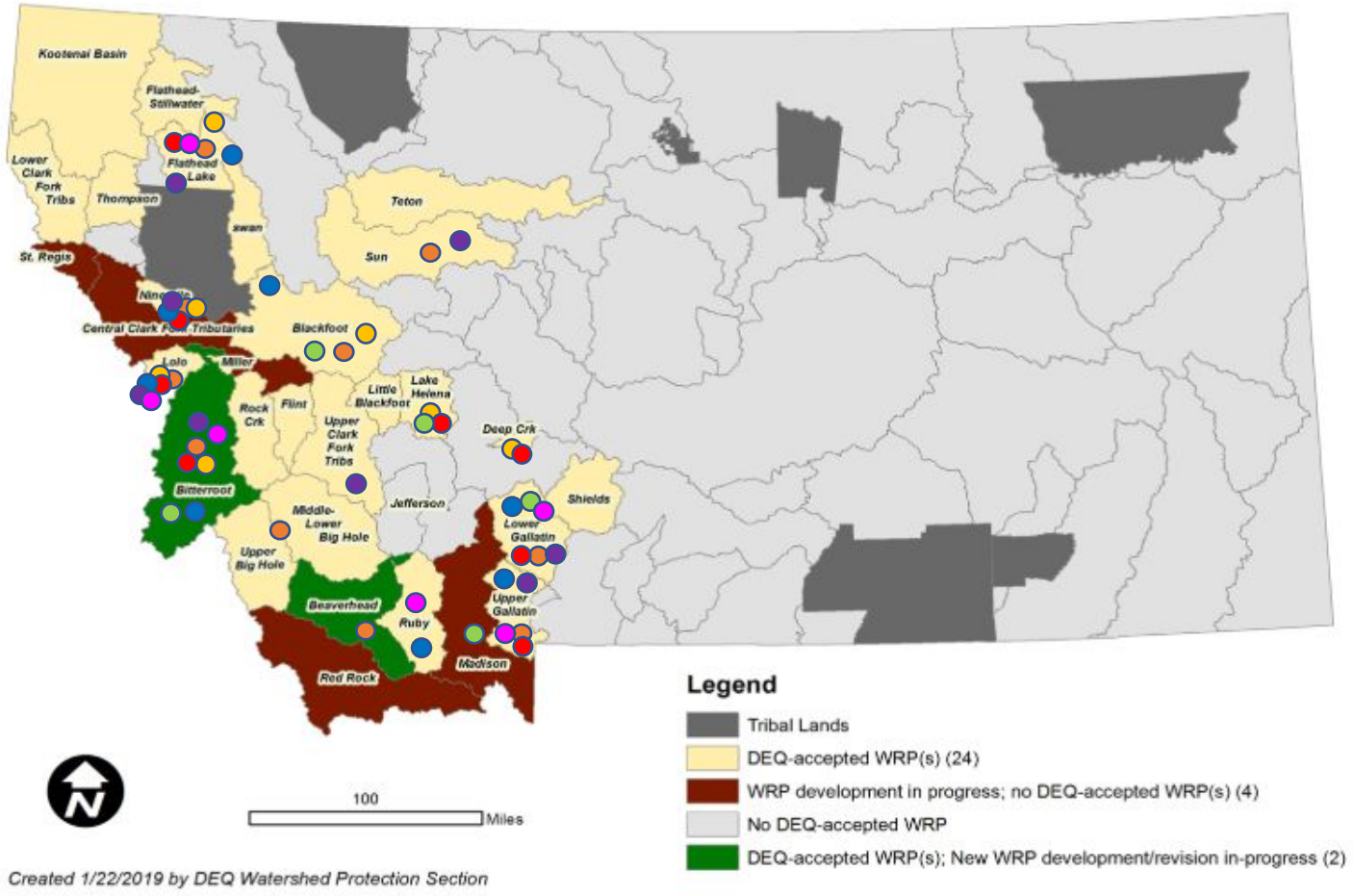
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS of MONTANA

AmeriCorps

MONTANA WATERSHED COORDINATION COUNCIL

AMERICORPS MONTANA

Big Sky Watershed Corps 319 Support: Implementing WRPs Since 2015



Created 1/22/2019 by DEQ Watershed Protection Section

Legend:

- 2015: Capacity Support
- 2016: Capacity Support
- 2017: Capacity and Project Support
- 2018: Capacity and Project Support
- 2019: Capacity and Project Support
- 2020: Capacity Support and Project Support
- 2021: Capacity Support (Project Support TBD)

**Map does not include all BSWC host sites implementing WRPs, only host sites MWCC has supported with 319 funds for WRP implementation.*